

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): An automatic hitch comprising:

- (a) a base;
- (b) a support surface;
- (c) a jaw assembly connected to said base and having engaged and disengaged positions;
- (d) a biasing member associated with said jaw assembly, said biasing member configured to normally bias said jaw assembly downwardly toward said support surface; ~~and~~
- (e) a release mechanism configured to pivot relative to said base and configured to apply upward force to said jaw assembly upon downward actuation of said release mechanism to move said jaw assembly into said disengaged position; ~~;~~ and
- (f) a foot step configured to be controlled by a foot and to cause said downward actuation of said release mechanism.

Claim 2 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, further comprising a casing configured to house said base.

Claim 3 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said jaw assembly comprises a counterbalance.

Claim 4 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 3, wherein said counterbalance is configured to augment said biasing member.

Claim 5 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said jaw assembly comprises a hook at one end.

Claim 6 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said jaw assembly is pivotally connected to said base.

Claim 7 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said release mechanism comprises a disengaging arm adjacent to one end of said release mechanism.

Claim 8 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said release mechanism comprises an actuation step.

Claim 9 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said release mechanism is pivotally connected to said base.

Claim 10 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 1, wherein said biasing member comprises a spring.

Claim 11 (currently amended): An automatic hitch comprising:

(a) — a casing;

(b) a base having a support surface;

(c) a jaw assembly pivotally connected to said base and having engaged and disengaged positions;

(d) a biasing member associated with said jaw assembly, said biasing member configured to normally bias said jaw assembly toward said support surface; and

(e) a release mechanism configured to pivot relative to said base and configured to apply upward force to said jaw assembly upon downward actuation of said release mechanism to move said jaw assembly into said disengaged position.

Claim 12 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 11, wherein said jaw assembly comprises a counterbalance configured to augment said biasing member.

Claim 13 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 11, wherein said release mechanism comprises a disengaging arm adjacent to one end of said release mechanism.

Claim 14 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 11, wherein said release mechanism comprises an actuation step.

Claim 15 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 11, wherein said release mechanism is pivotally connected to said base.

Claim 16 (original): The automatic hitch as in claim 11, wherein said biasing member comprises a spring.

Claims 17-19 (cancelled)

Claim 20 (new): An automatic hitch comprising:

- (a) a base having a support surface;
- (b) a jaw assembly configured to engage a trailer hitch and configured to pivot relative to said base and having engaged and disengaged positions;
- (c) a biasing member associated with said jaw assembly, said biasing member configured to normally bias said jaw assembly toward said support surface;  
and
- (d) a foot step configured to pivot relative to said base and to cause upward movement of said jaw assembly upon downward actuation of said foot step.